UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1996/635
7 August 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

IDENTICAL LETTERS DATED 6 AUGUST 1996 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE SYRIAN ARAB REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Regrettably, the letter dated 21 June 1996 addressed to you by the former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey and circulated in Security Council document S/1996/479 of 27 June (reissued on 2 July) contains groundless allegations against my country. I am therefore obliged to correct the documentary record of the United Nations by means of the following statement:

1. The letter acknowledges that the terrorism in question is that of a Turkish political party. Everyone is aware that this problem is an internal one and that Syria has not intervened in the issue in any way or at any time. My country therefore rejects the allegations made against it in the letter.

2. As you know and as the Member States of the Organization are aware, the United Nations resolutions mentioned in the Turkish letter have been accepted by the Syrian Arab Republic. It has, in many an international forum, affirmed its condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and with all its methods and practices, and it has called for measures to combat and eliminate the phenomenon. The Syrian Arab Republic has also accepted these resolutions because it is guided by the Charter of the United Nations, by the principles of international law, by the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights and by the General Assembly's Declaration on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, which makes a distinction between terrorism and the legitimate struggle of peoples resisting foreign occupation.

3. The Syrian Arab Republic has constantly affirmed its commitment to relations of good-neighbourliness with the Republic of Turkey, and it has made sincere efforts in that regard. It has constantly endeavoured to develop means of constructive dialogue with a view to preserving relations of friendship between the Syrian and Turkish peoples and safeguarding their common interests.

Permit me, in closing, to assure you and the Member States of the Organization that the Syrian Arab Republic is committed to the purposes and

principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles and norms of international law and to express the hope that Turkey's new Government will afford more suitable opportunities for us to affirm our common interest in the principle of good-neighbourliness and the desire of the Syrian and Turkish Governments to eliminate the causes of misunderstanding between the two neighbouring countries.

I should be grateful if the text of my letter could be circulated to Member States as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ahmad HALLAK
Chargé d'affaires a.i.